

Arthur Plettner

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How to Write Music

By

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Arthur Plettner

How to Write Music

Musical Orthography

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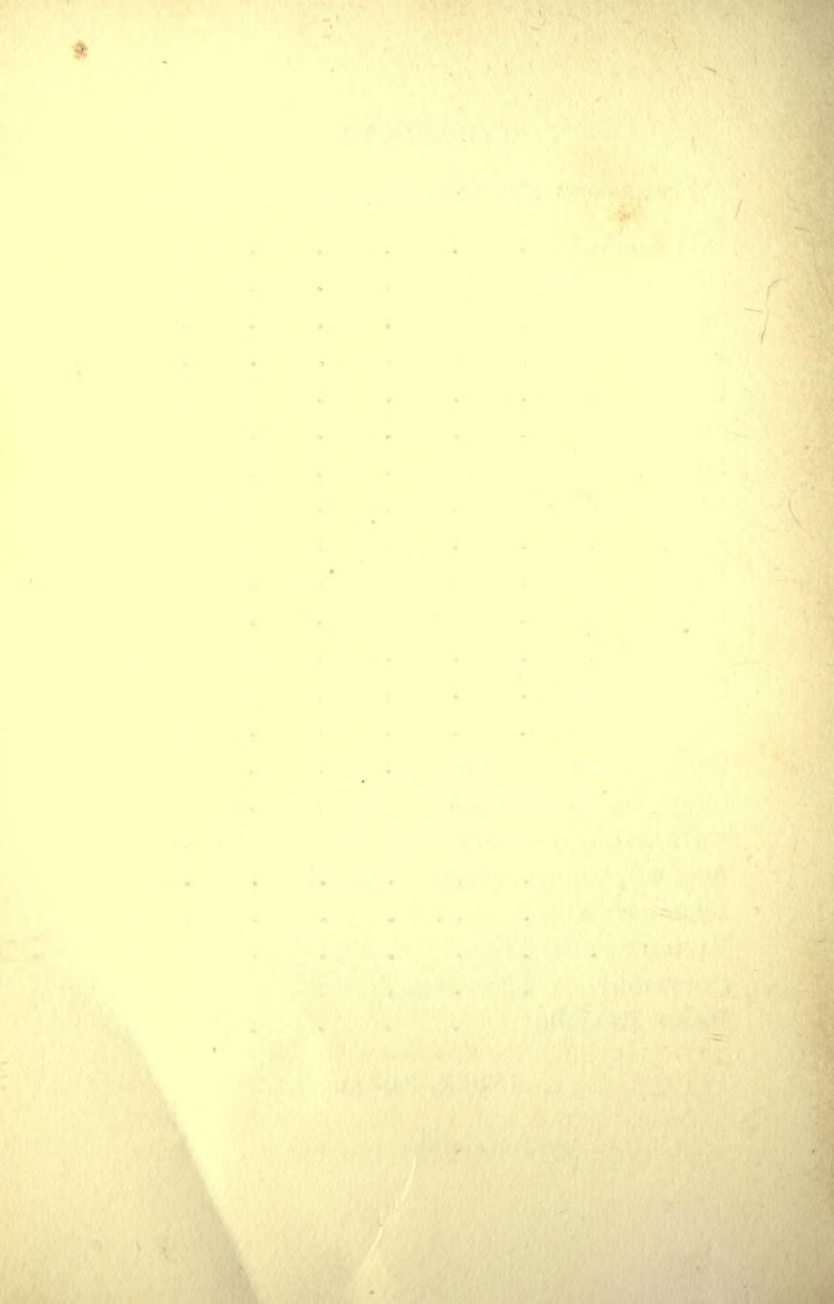
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How to Write Music

I.—It is reasonable to expect that a musician shall be at least an accurate and legible writer as well as a reader of the language of his Art. The immense increase in the amount of music published, and its cheapness, seem rather to have increased than decreased this necessity, for they have vastly multiplied activity in the Art. If they have not intensified the necessity for music-writing, they have increased the number of those by whom the necessity is felt. Introductory.

Intelligent knowledge of Notation is the more necessary inasmuch as music-writing is in only a comparatively few cases mere copying. Even when writing from a copy, some alteration is frequently necessary, as will be shown in the following pages, requiring independent knowledge of the subject on the part of the copyist. (See *e.g.*, par. 28.)

Yet many musicians, thoroughly competent as performers, cannot write a measure of music without bringing a smile to the lips of the initiated.

Many performers will play or sing a note at sight without hesitation, which, asked to write,

they will first falter over and then bungle—at least by writing it at the wrong octave.

The admirable working of theoretical examination papers is sometimes in ridiculous contrast with the puerility of the writing.

Psychologists would probably say that this was because conceptual action is a higher mental function than perceptual: in other words, that recollection is harder than recognition.

The remedy is simple. Recognition must be developed till it becomes recollection: the writing of music must be taught concurrently with the reading of it.

This was once the case: music-writing was a necessary part of a musician's education. One may be the more surprised at its falling into disuse, inasmuch as phonography—in the musical sense—is a distinctly pleasant occupation. Without being either drawing or writing, it partakes of the nature of both.

But many points in the writing of music are not now considered to form part of the Rudiments of Music, and are not included in primers on the subject.

Hence the following pages.

While containing some matter which may have escaped the attention of more advanced musicians, they should, in an educational course, either be used along with a Primer on the Elements, or immediately follow it.

2.—The first matter to claim attention in making a manuscript copy of music is choice of the right kind of music-paper. This will primarily be determined by the number of staves each score requires. Most paper contains twelve staves to the page. This is a most convenient number, allowing for a two-, three-, four-, or six-stave score.

Choice of
Paper.

Song-paper: three-stave score, two staves being braced for the piano part, with a third for the voice part. This latter is at a considerable distance above the other staves, to allow room for writing in the words.

Organ-music paper: three-stave score, two staves braced for manual part, and another underneath for pedal part.

Quartet-paper: four stave score, no brackets or clefs.

Quartet-paper with accompaniment: six-stave score, two bracketed for piano part.

Full-score paper: much smaller than short-score staves. Very useful for other purposes where a small, narrow stave is required.

For piano and violin music, paper should be chosen the staves of which are wide apart, to allow of the large number of leger lines frequently required.

3.—The paper chosen, the first use of a pen will be in ruling the score-lines. A "score" technically is as many

Scoring.

staves as are *performed simultaneously*: two in pianoforte music, three in organ music, four in an unaccompanied quartet, six in four-part vocal music with piano accompaniment, and so on. These staves have a line drawn down their left-hand edge. Hence the name, from their being *scored* through.

Their position always being at the left-hand edge of the staves, and their length determined by the number of staves, they may be drawn before the length of the measures has been arranged.

Care must be taken when a page is ruled at a time not to draw the score-line through more than the necessary number of staves. Except in a full score there will generally be at least two, and, of course, very often more, scores to the page.

Barring. 4.—After the score-lines come the bar-lines. And with the arranging of these begins that *careful mapping-out* of the whole work, neglect of which will lead to endless annoyance and dissatisfaction.

Some music is so uniform that a given space may be assigned to each measure, and consequently a uniform number of measures to each score, provided that there is no change of key or time. In determining this space allowance must be made (1) in the first measure of each movement for the key and time signatures, which may require a considerable space; (2) in the first measure of each score for the *key*

signature: the time signature is only repeated at the beginning of each movement or when the time is changed; (3) regard must be had to where a turn-over will come, some passages allowing of this so much more easily than others; (4) also to the number of measures in the entire movement, otherwise a new page may have to be added for only one measure! (5) in vocal music careful regard must be paid to the words as well as the notes. A syllable will often require more space than a note, consequently in very simple music the words require more space than the music. In florid compositions a syllable, on the other hand, is often sung, not to several notes merely, but to several measures, and the music requires much more space than the words. In the former case the author has found it a good plan to write the words first, or at least a measure or two of them, as a guide in estimating their average length. But, while the words must not be cramped, they must fall under the notes to which they are to be sung, and as these notes must occupy as nearly as possible their proportionate part of the measure, the skilful scribe will keep both words and music in mind simultaneously. Where, however, in vocal or instrumental music the measures vary greatly, one having, perhaps, a single whole note and the next thirty-two thirty-second notes, it is necessary to plan each score separately, or

the end may be reached with too much space for the last measure, but not enough for another one. Carrying a measure from the end of one score to the beginning of the next is not practised now, as it once was.

Bar-lines are usually drawn through each staff of vocal music separately, and in instrumental music through as many staves as belong to the same instrument or group of instruments, *e.g.*, through the two staves of a piano part, and the four or five belonging to the "strings" in a full score. These instrumental staves are also usually connected by a brace at the left-hand edge of each score thus:

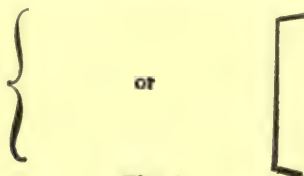


Fig. 1.

Uniform bar-lines may be ruled a page at a time, if care be taken not to make the line continuous through more than the required number of staves. It is a fault which one commits the moment watchfulness is relaxed, and entails much scratching out. Where the measures vary in length the ruling will most readily be done in light pencil with a T square, and afterwards inked. A single bar-line out of the perpendicular will spoil the appearance of a whole page.

5.—The first actual musical characters to be written are the clefs. Clefs.
Misconception of the function of these is so common, not among practical musicians only, but on the part of elementary theorists, that a few words of explanation are necessary. The commonest fallacies are to suppose that if clefs are the right shape their exact position on the staff does not matter, and that their position varies. Both suppositions are, to quote a delightful Ruskinism, “accurately false.” A clef identifies and originally was used with *a single line*, and identifies others only by their relationship to this. Hence its precise shape is of less importance than its being on the right line. Indeed, the shape of clefs has varied so much that many able practical musicians do not know that they were originally simple letters, the treble clef a small “g,” the bass clef a small “f.” From this beginning has been evolved so elaborate a sign, sometimes not merely covering all the lines of a staff, but going beyond them, that it is necessary to explain which line a clef is on. Thus the “G,” or treble clef, is on that line which its interior termination is on, and which it curls round, touching it in all *four times*. The upper part of the treble clef is sometimes kept within the staff, but, as in the present examples, more often rises above the staff. The point is merely a matter of taste.

The C clef is on that line which has an oblique or straight stroke, or pot-hook, above and below.

The F clef is on that line which its interior termination is on, and which it curls round either to the right or the left, and which has a dot above and below.

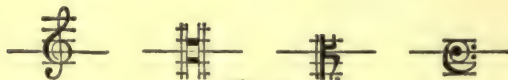


Fig. 2.

And this position never varies. Whatever line the F clef is on is F, however many or few lines may be above or below it.

In olden days any clef line might be taken with any number of lines above and below. For instance, the F line with two lines below and two above; or three below and one above. This is not now done with treble and bass clefs, which are only used with respectively the top and bottom five lines of the Great Stave of eleven lines. Hence care must be taken to write the treble clef on the *second*, and the bass clef on the *fourth* line of its stave. But it is still customary to use the C clef, especially in viola and trombone music, with both two lines above and two below, making the alto stave; and three below and one above, making the tenor stave. These staves are also used in old vocal music, and familiarity with them is absolutely necessary in all advanced theoretical examinations. The C clef, therefore, *appears*

to move, being sometimes on the third and sometimes on the fourth line. Really it is always on the same line, and it is the *selection of lines* which varies. Hence the misdescription of the treble and bass clefs as "immovable," the C clef as "movable."

Note that all clefs are on lines; no clef is in a space. This is because the first attempt to accurately represent music to the eye was by means of a single line with a letter at the beginning. This was what has since become the fourth line, the clef line, of the bass staff.

In pianoforte and organ music, high parts for the left hand, or low ones for the right, may be written either:

By means of leger lines (Fig. 3, *a*);

By changing the clef (*b*); or

By writing the part in the staff proper to the other hand (*c*).

The figure shows two staves of music in 4/4 time. The top staff uses a treble clef. It is divided into three measures: (a) shows a melody written on the first three lines of the staff, with three leger lines below; (b) shows the same melody with a C-clef on the fourth line; (c) shows the melody with a bass clef on the fourth line, with the letters 'L.H.' written below. The bottom staff uses a bass clef and shows the same melody written in the correct staff.

Fig. 3.

The example, of course, illustrates a high part for the left hand.

The first method is the hardest to write and read. There is not much to choose between the second and third. If the third be adopted

care must be taken not to insert rests in the vacant stave: their absence shows that the *hand* is not resting.

When a part, in organ or piano music, though mainly in its proper stave, *begins* with notes more easily written in the other, the clef proper to the part should be inserted, as showing its general character, and immediately followed by that in which the notes are most conveniently written. Thus Fig. 3, *b*, if the *first* measure of a composition, should have an F clef immediately preceding the G clef in the left-hand part.

A change of clef affecting the *first note* of a score should be anticipated in the last measure of the previous score, and repeated in the measure affected. This is especially the case in regard to the first score of a new page involving a turn-over. In addition to anticipating the clef, the old plan of inserting a "direct" is to be recommended. See Fig. 4.

The image shows two pages of musical notation. Page 1 features two staves. The top staff begins with a C-clef (soprano clef), a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/2 time signature. The bottom staff begins with a G-clef (treble clef), a key signature of one sharp (F#), and contains the instruction "Volti subito." at the end of the first measure. Page 2 shows the continuation of the music on two staves, with the top staff starting with a C-clef and the bottom staff with a G-clef, both in the same key signature and time signature as Page 1.

Fig. 4.

The signature should be repeated in the changed clef. After a change of clef in the *middle* of a score this is, of course, not necessary.

6.—Following the clef comes the key signature. In printed music this is repeated at the beginning of every score. As preventing many mistakes the repetition is desirable. But in manuscript music it is very usual to repeat it only at the head of each page. Common faults are:

(1) Placing the sharps or flats at the wrong octave. The first sharp should, in the treble clef, be on the top line, not in the bottom space. And the second flat should be in the top space, not on the bottom line. The customary way of writing signatures is not, in the writer's opinion, invariably the best. But solecisms, though not in themselves inaccurate, should be avoided as causing unnecessary trouble and confusion.

(2) A perhaps commoner fault is in not allowing sufficient space for the signature, and therefore cramping it. Each sharp or flat should be well to the right-hand of the preceding one, never over or under it.

(3) Sharps, flats, and naturals, like clefs, cover much more of the stave than the single line or space which they govern. Not nearly enough care is usually exercised to make the

center of the sharp, or the loop of the flat, exactly correspond with this, as it should.

7.—The time signature need only be inserted where there is a change of movement. In common time there is a choice between the numeral signature “4” and the letter signature “C.” The latter is the more interesting historically. Originally it was not a letter at all; the monks, who originated modern musical notation, called triple time “perfect” in honor of the Blessed Trinity, and represented it with the sign of perfection—a circle: common, or quadruple time, they called imperfect, and cut a slice out of the right-hand side of the circle to represent imperfection. This printers, not unnaturally, mistook for the initial letter of “Common Time.” But the numeral signature is rapidly superseding this, as showing the exact value of a measure, and being in accordance with the signatures of all other kinds of time.

8.—Following the time-signature come the notes. The guiding principle in writing these is that their right interpretation shall be apparent to the eye. Two points are of paramount importance. These are (1) the selection of the right characters (this of course only affects those who are writing original compositions or arrangements, not

**Notation of
Rhythm.**

mere copists), and (2) the correct placing of these in the measure. The bare duration of a note, its merely arithmetical value, can generally be expressed in more ways than one. But this is not sufficient. That way must be selected which represents its *rhythm*, its correct accentuation, *to the eye*. Simple forms of time, as distinct from Compound, contain but few pitfalls, and even an inexperienced writer is not likely to go far wrong.

9.—It may be as well to warn such an one, however, that it is not nowadays customary to dot an unaccented note or rest. The dot in this case would represent the succeeding accented beat, and not represent it nearly as significantly as does a tied note or separate rest; compare *a* and *b*, Fig. 5.



Fig. 5.

10.—Tied notes should not be employed where a single note would represent the same sound *without misrepresenting the rhythm*. Their chief function is to represent durations which *cannot* be represented by a single character, such as five eighth notes.

11.—In pianoforte music a note is very occasionally intended to be reiterated before the first iteration has ceased to sound. This is effected by allowing the key to rise sufficiently to release the hammer, but not sufficiently to reimpose the damper on the string. The second sound therefore overtakes the first. (It is comparatively easy on some pianos and very hard on others.) As the sound, though periodically reinforced, is continuous, the composer indicates his intention by a tie. There is nothing but one's judgment to distinguish this from the ordinary kind of tie. The chief indication is the employment of a tie where a single musical character would otherwise have been better. For instance, the following tied sixteenth notes from the Adagio of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 106, could better have been represented by eighth notes, had it not been for the intention of overlapping iteration (Fig. 6).

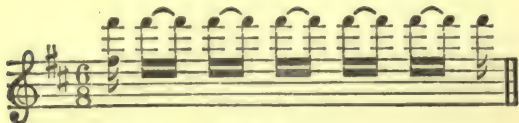


Fig. 6.

The ties commencing in measure 134 of Beethoven's well-known Sonata Pastorale were evidently regarded by Cipriani Potter as of this order. As having been a personal friend of Beethoven's he was likely to know. (The

great composer refers to him in corresponding with Ries in 1818.) The duration of these notes *could not have been written otherwise* than by means of ties. The above test is therefore inapplicable; this is evidently why, in the edition edited by Potter, they are marked with a tie *plus* a dot and horizontal stroke (Fig. 6a).

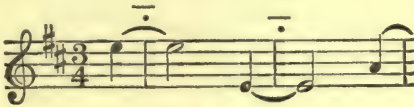



Fig. 6a.

Another indication is the tying of an unaccented note to an accented one, thus obliterating the accent if the tie be observed literally (instances occur in Chopin's Valse, Op. 31, No. 1). So much critical judgment, however, is required to distinguish this treatment from that proper to a tie, that composers would do well to adopt some such method as Cipriani Potter's to make their exact meaning clear.

This interpretation of a tie, according to which the notes, since they overlap, are *just not separated*, must not be confused with the *mezzo-staccato* touch, also indicated with a slur, but having dots also (in the case of a single note indicated by a stroke with a dot), and which means that the notes are to be *just not joined*. In *legato*, of course, they should be neither separated nor overlapping, but exactly contiguous.

12.—The commonest errors in simple time are not in regard to notes, but rests. This is because silence *cannot be divided or syncopated*, and therefore that would often be quite right as a representation of sound which is quite wrong as a representation of silence. Thus a beat should not be represented by two rests where one would do, though it might be by two notes (see *a*, Fig. 7). Nor one rest represent parts of two beats (see *b*, Fig. 7). Nor one rest represent an unaccented and an accented beat (see *c*, Fig. 7). In triple time it is better to avoid a single rest representing the latter and greater part of a measure (see *d*, Fig. 7), indeed, it may be said that half-note rests should not be used in triple time.

Not good. 

(a) (b) (c) (d)

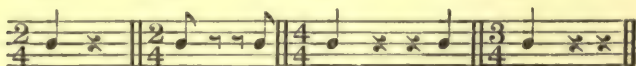
Good. 

Fig. 7.

13.—But in compound time errors, if not more numerous in kind, are much more common anyway in regard to *notes* as distinct from rests. A note should never be written which represents a beat and *part* of another. The commonest violation of this principle—and it is very common—is in writing a dotted half note in six-eight time; this divides the measure into three

thirds instead of two halves, by representing a beat-and-a-third and two thirds of a beat (see *a*, Fig. 8). A beat-and-a-third, if required, should be represented by a note of the value of a beat tied to one of the value of a third, never by a single note equalling both—a half note in this case (see *b*, Fig. 8). A similar principle applies to rests. A measure's silence should be represented by rests divisible into beats, not by rests which fuse a beat and part of the next (see *c*, Fig. 8). Two dotted quarter notes in twelve-sixteen time are not so bad as a dotted half note in six-eight time, as they correctly represent the division of the measure into two halves, but they misrepresent these halves as consisting of three sixths of a measure whereas they rhythmically consist of two quarters (see *d*, Fig. 8).

Not good. $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

(a) (b) (b)

Good. $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

Not good. $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$

(c) (d)

Good. $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$ $\frac{12}{16}$

Fig. 8.

A twelve-sixteen measure of *silence* is much easier to write, since it can be done by a single whole note rest, which is also commonly used as a measure-rest, irrespective of the value of the measure. (Hence the German name *takt-pause*.) The six-eight measure of silence (see *c*, Fig. 8) might also, of course, have been written in the above way, or by *quarter, eighth, quarter, eighth* rests in place of the dotted rests.

Placing of Notes. 14.—The characters which will correctly represent the given rhythm having been determined, the second point is the correct placing of them in the measure. Mentally, at least, the measure should be divided into as many equal portions as there are beats in it. One well-known composer, it is said, *rules* beat-lines in light pencil, as well as bar-lines, in his full scores. In very elaborate music this symmetrical arrangement cannot be fully carried out; sixty-four sixty-fourth notes cannot be written in the same space as one whole note; and a whole note would look lost in the space required for the sixty-fourth notes. But simple music can be made quite symmetrical, and in all music such beat-lines, actual or mental, are an invaluable check and guide.

Each note should be placed in the *left-hand* end of its space. This is for the simple reason that music, like words, is read from left to right and, roughly, space represents duration. Any

other arrangement is misleading, as may be seen from old music, in which a note was often placed in the *middle* of its space. The following (Fig. 9) is an example from an organ work of Rinck's (1770-1846).

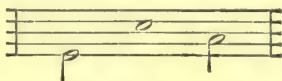


Fig. 9.

But for the fact that in open score half notes below the middle line have their stems turned down, even an expert would not improbably suppose the time to be four half notes in the bar. This is not the case, the time is two half notes and the whole note is to be sounded *simultaneously* with the two half notes.

"Confusion worse confounded," is, so far as the eye is concerned, hardly too strong a term to apply to the results of this illogical method when applied to polyphonic music. Compare *a* and *b*, Fig. 10, in the former of which four notes intended to be begun simultaneously are no two of them in line, owing to each being in the *middle* of its space!



Fig. 10.

This practice was consistently carried out, even when it involved writing a note on the bar-line! or a note in one measure and its dot in the next (see Fig. 11).

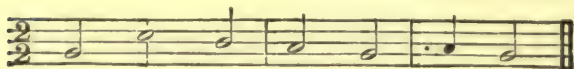



Fig. 11.

(Pianists will recall a modern instance, so far as the dot is concerned, in a little exercise in C major of Czerny's.)

The practice cannot have been due to the non-invention of the "tie" or "bind." For though the first use of this is difficult to trace, clear instances, in the form of a bracket, , occur in Morley's *Practical Music*, published in 1597.

15.—Rests, especially whole note
Rests. rests, when used for a whole measure, are still very often illogically placed in the *middle* of the space they represent. This has been defended on the ground that they represent silence or *inaction*, and that therefore no error can arise from their appearance being deferred. But a performer should be conscious of the action *or inaction* of every voice or part. If there be a seeming vacuum or hiatus, how is he to know whether it is a note or rest which has been omitted? If he concludes, from the ab-

sence of any note, that a rest is intended, he can only *guess* how long it will prove to be when it does come. Therefore, in the writer's opinion, rests should be located on the same principle as notes. If it be not a profanation to say so, since the example is from Bach, the rest in Fig. 12 would have been better placed at the beginning of the measure. Let a sheet of paper be held over the right half of the measure, and though the player will be able to begin, he will not know in how many parts the piece is written.

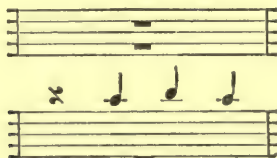


Fig. 12.

16.—In open score, that is, in writing a single melody or part on one staff, it is usual to make whole note rests below the fourth line, and half note rests above the third. Quarter note rests should be written exactly in the middle of the staff. The crook of eighth note rests, and the upper crook of shorter rests, is generally placed in the third space, in the absence of any reason to the contrary. The stems of rests are, in manuscript music especially, better slanted somewhat. This helps to distinguish them from

the stems of notes—in rapidly written manuscript a not unimportant thing!

17.—There are two forms of quarter note rest, the English, which is like the eighth note rest but turned to the right-hand, and the German, which is somewhat difficult to describe. The German is far the better of the two as being much more distinct from the eighth note rest. It is, however, harder to write, and of the slightly varying forms, perhaps the easiest is that with a crook at each end of a very oblique stem and which is thus very much like a reversed letter Z (see the first example in Fig. 13).



Manuscript forms of German quarter note rest.

Fig. 13.

18.—In short score, that is, in writing two or more parts or voices on one staff, the rests are placed, not only in the top or bottom space of the staff as may best indicate to which part they apply, but above and below it, involving, in the case of whole note and half note rests, the use of a leger-line (see *b*, Fig. 14). This is partly because *the stems of all rests are turned down*, and therefore cannot be made, as the stems of notes can, to indicate the part they belong to by the direction taken. This, there-

fore, has to be shown by their position on, or off, the staff (see Fig. 14).



Fig. 14.

It will be seen that the lower eighth note rest in the first example belongs to the same part as the following sixteenth note rest, though by no means on a line with it.

19.—In modern piano music which is not of a strictly part-writing character, rests often represent the absence, not of a part or voice, *but of the hand*. If the notes, though representing as many parts as the piece can be supposed to possess, are all to be played by one hand, rests are employed to represent the absence of the other.

And in music which *is* of a part-writing character, though the parts are *incomplete*, rests are often *not* employed if both hands are engaged (see Fig. 3, *c*, bass clef, supposing it to be of more than two parts).

Bach rarely, if ever, employed rests to represent the hand; with him they always represent a voice. Thus in a melodic or one-part passage divided between the hands, each playing alter-

nate groups, he used no rests to represent the absent hand. These, appearing simultaneously with the notes, would have implied a second part. With him rests represent a living, though absent, voice; in modern usage they frequently represent, not music, but the way of playing it. See Fig. 15, the first half of which is in *two* parts, therefore rests represent the thirty-second note silences; and the second half of which is in *one* part, therefore no rests are employed though only one hand is engaged at a time. It is from a B flat Prelude in Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier*.



Fig. 15.

Dots. 20.—Dots are used in music for three purposes: (1) as repeat marks, (2) to indicate semi-staccato, (3) to prolong a note one half. As repeat marks, they

may be placed in each of the four spaces of the staff (which in the writer's opinion is the better plan, as being less liable to confusion with time-dots), or in the second and third spaces only, in accordance with a modern custom. *Staccato* dots and *staccatissimo* dashes, when two parts are being written on one staff, should be placed below the note if applying to the lower part, and above if applying to the higher. In the case of open score (a single part on one staff), they are best placed on the side opposite the stem.

Time-dots, or those which prolong a note one half, if applied to a note in a space, should be in the same space as the note; if applied to a note on a line they should be placed in the space above, if the next note of the part is higher, and in the space below if it is lower. The importance of this usage is often overlooked. If it cannot be called a rule, it is high time it was made one! When two parts are written on one staff, and a note is doubled, having two stems, one up and the other down, to indicate this, and in one part it is dotted, and in the other not, it is impossible, apart from this rule, to tell which part has the note dotted and which not (except, of course, from the context, which may expose any mistake). The following example from Henry Smart's "Festive March in D," for the organ, appears to contain two dotted half notes. It would probably be so read by anyone playing the passage at sight. The con-

text shows that it is the eighth note not the half note which is intended to be dotted. All the dots except that to the last note but one should have been in the space *below* the note, where this is on a line.



Fig. 16.

Logic would suggest that where a doubled, that is a two-stemmed, note is dotted in both parts or voices, *two* dots should follow one above the other. This would, however, be awkward when the note was in a space; and also when it was on a line, if, as in the last group above, *both* voices proceeded to a lower note (or both to a higher). For according to the rule here being considered, both dots would have to be in the space below (or above).

There is another slight inaccuracy in the above example which will be noticed later on. Let the tyro try and find it!

21.—As regards distance from the note they prolong, time-dots may be written either *immediately* after such note, as in Fig. 16, or in the part of the measure with which they syn-

chronize, as in the following excerpt from Sterndale Bennett's piano study "The Lake."



Fig. 17.

Elsewhere throughout the same study the composer has placed dots immediately after the note they prolong. Here, therefore, he seems to have anticipated the objection that he was dotting *un*-accented notes (see "Notation of Rhythm," Par. 9), and to refute it by showing that there are in reality two series of accents in each measure, at cross purposes with each other, that, indeed, the alto and tenor measures are an eighth note behind the treble, though they could not be written with separate bar-lines. This is clear when the whole passage is seen. Observe that the dot to the last note of a measure is placed at the beginning of the next, to make the overlapping clear to the eye. (Also that the dots to the last alto and tenor quarter notes are placed not in the space next, but in the space next-but-one higher than the note they prolong.) Dots are not infrequently placed thus—that is, in or near the part of the measure with which they synchronize—apart from any such purpose as that just explained.

The dot made its first appearance in music

about A.D. 1300. Sometimes it had a tail ("*punctus caudatus*") and looked not unlike an inverted comma. It did not, however, acquire its present meaning till about a century later.

Stems. 22.—There is no rule as to the length of stems, and they vary greatly. The stems in a single group of notes are as often as not of different lengths, according to the position of the notes and the direction taken by the hook. A common fault is to make them too short, especially when the four hooks of a sixty-fourth note have to be added. This, however, is generally the result of a badly directed hook (see *a*, Fig. 18).

23.—As to the *direction* they take there is a definite rule. In open score (when one part only is being written on a staff), the stems of notes *above* the middle line should be turned *down*, the stems of those *below* the middle line should be turned *up* (see *b*, Fig. 18). The object of this is to keep the stems within the staff and prevent their sprawling above or below. The ill-equipped writer betrays himself by nothing more often than by sprawling stems.

The stems in a group of notes are generally turned according to the direction of the first note, or the majority. In a group containing a wide skip they are often turned individually according to the rule, involving opposite direc-

tions, the hook being drawn between them (see *c*, Fig. 18).

Five exceptions are common: (1) The stem of a grace note is almost invariably turned upwards, though according to Dr. Hullah it should be turned in the direction contrary to that of the stem of the principal note, for the sake of greater distinctness (see *d*, Fig. 18). In "copy" for the printer grace-notes are best written in red ink. (2) In piano music when a single part, or row of notes, is to be divided between the hands, one playing one group and the other the next, the stems of the right-hand notes are turned up, and those of the left down (see Fig. 15, latter half of measure). (3) Similarly in some organ music, especially that printed in Germany, pedal notes which are to be played by the right foot have the stems turned up, those by the left, down. (4) In vocal music, when a subsequent verse, though having the same notes, requires different time-values from the first verse, or a translation requires different time-values from the original language, the time-values required by one verse or language have the stems of the notes turned up, those required by the other down (see *e*, Fig. 18, from Molique's oratorio "Abraham"). (5) In music written on two staves, when the notes of a single group skip from one staff to the other, the hook is placed between the staves, and the stems of the notes on the lower staff are turned up, and of those

on the upper staff down, irrespective of their relation to the middle line of the staff (see *f*, Fig. 18, from the "Moonlight" Sonata).



Fig. 18.

24.—In short score, that is when two parts have to be written on one staff, the stems belonging to the upper part should be turned upwards, and those to the lower downwards. Only by this means can the course of the parts be made clear to the eye. When the parts cross, the rule must be strictly adhered to: the note belonging to the upper *part*, not the *upper note*, must have the upward stem. To make quite clear which note each stem belongs to, it is well in this case to make the notes a little less close together than they otherwise would be (see *a*, Fig. 19, a well-known case from a chant by Sir John Goss, where the tenor goes below the bass). Sometimes *more* than two parts are written on one staff; in this case the stems of two parts

must be turned the same way, and considerable ingenuity is required to make the course of the parts clear. Usually the middle part varies in the direction of its stems. Simultaneous notes are generally written not quite in a line with each other, to allow of separate stems: the stems are generally rather short, so as not to run into each other, and the hooks of simultaneous eighths and shorter notes do not concur. Two measures from Bach's piano fugues will illustrate these points (*b* and *c*, Fig. 19).



Fig. 19.

25.—The stems of rests are always turned downwards.

26.—There is also a definite rule as to the *side* of a note at which the stem should be placed: stems turned upwards should be at the right-hand side of the note-head, those downwards, at the left. This rule is observed less in the case of half notes than of shorter notes—for what reason the writer is unable to say.

27.—At one time whole notes and shorter notes were not round, but lozenge-shaped, the longer notes being square, and the stem was then in the middle, thus \diamond . These gave way to

round notes about the seventeenth century. Playford's well-known *Whole Booke of Psalms*, published about 1675, was probably one of the earliest books printed wholly with round notes.

28.—It follows from the foregoing rules that even so apparently simple a task as transcribing a part—soprano, alto, tenor, or bass—from a short-score hymn or chant book into a choir part-book is not mere copying. In the hymn or chant book the stems of one part are all turned the same way: in the part-book they must be turned according to their relation to the middle line.

Hooks. 29.—With one exception, hooks should be made at the *right-hand* side of the stem; they are therefore sometimes at the same side as the note-head, and sometimes not.

30.—The exception is when longer and shorter notes are combined in the same group. In this case the hooks not common to the whole group are invariably turned so as to lie *within* the group, and, subject to this, if the group contains more than one beat, so as to lie *within* the beat of which they form part.

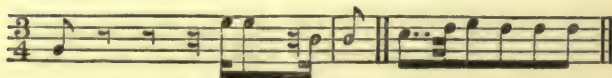


Fig. 20.

31.—Previous to 1660, each eighth or shorter note had a separate hook or hooks. But at the time of the Restoration, John Playford substituted a connecting horizontal line for the separate hooks of two or more eighths belonging to the same division of the measure. The device was copied by the Dutch, French, and Germans. The Italians did not adopt it till later. Thus, Marcello's Psalms, published in Venice as late as 1724-27, have separate hooks. (In an edition in the writer's possession, published in 1757, *united* hooks are used, but this is probably rather due to the *venue* than to the later date.)

32.—Hooks in instrumental music must be united in strict accordance with the laws of rhythm (see "Notation of Rhythm," pars. 8-13). Thus, four eighth notes must not have the same hook in Compound Time: they must be grouped as three and one, or one and three, or two and two, according to the position they occupy in the beat they belong to. In three-four time, six eighth notes may have one hook, but in six-eight time they should preferably have separate hooks of three eighth notes each. Broadly speaking, the notes forming a single beat of the measure should be united in one hook, but very commonly two beats have one hook between them, especially in four-four time.

In the case of sixteenths and shorter notes, the outermost hook often shows the half-measure, and the inner hook or hooks the sub-division into beats (see Fig. 21).



Fig. 21.

33.—So closely should the hooks follow the rhythm, that where a phrase crosses the measure beginning at the end of one measure, and ending at the beginning of the next, the hook crosses the bar-line too, uniting notes in different measures (see *a*, Fig. 22). Notes may have the same hook though separated by a rest (see *b*, Fig. 22).

34.—The hook to a group of notes which ascends or descends may either slant in the direction taken by the notes, or may be straight (see *c*, Fig. 22). In the writer's opinion slanted hooks are preferable as being a better guide to the eye. In manuscript music, when hooks have to be drawn within the stave, and not above or below it, they should invariably be slanted when this is possible; otherwise they are very apt to coincide with the stave-lines, and fail of distinctness. A common fault is in not making them thick enough. Notes are sometimes "hooked" in accordance, not with

the rhythm, but with the hand which is to play them (see *d*, Fig. 22). This is necessitated by the usage with regard to stems in such cases [see "Stems," par. 22, exception (2)].

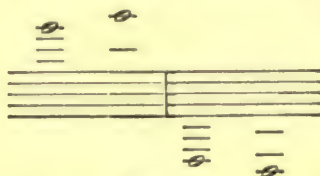
Figure 22 consists of four musical examples labeled (a) through (d).
 (a) A single staff in 2/4 time showing a sequence of notes with stems that are all slanted downwards, regardless of whether the notes are above or below the staff.
 (b) A single staff in 3/8 time showing notes with stems that are slanted downwards for notes above the staff and upwards for notes below the staff.
 (c) A single staff in 4/4 time showing notes with stems that are slanted downwards for notes above the staff and upwards for notes below the staff.
 (d) A two-staff system. The upper staff is labeled 'R.H.' (Right Hand) and is in 3/4 time. The lower staff is labeled 'L.H.' (Left Hand) and is in 4/4 time. The notes in the R.H. staff have stems slanted downwards, while the notes in the L.H. staff have stems slanted upwards.

Fig. 22.

35.—In vocal music notes should not have the same hook which are sung to a different syllable (see "Vocal Music," par. 37). Subject to these exceptions, notes must be grouped according to their rhythm.

36.—The appeal to the eye (see **Leger-lines,** "Notation of Rhythm," par. 8, and "Placing of Notes," par. 14) must be maintained as regards the pitch as well as the duration of notes—their perpendicular as well as their horizontal position. Consequently leger-lines must be the same distance from the stave, and from each other, as the stave-lines are one from another. Carelessness in this matter is very common and very confusing. How often a lower note looks as though above a higher one,

because leger-lines are cramped together in one case and too wide apart in another (see Fig. 23).



“Two things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other,” as Euclid says: let leger-lines be equidistant with staff-lines, and they will be level with each other.

But accuracy in the number of lines is of more importance than the appeal to the eye, and the appeal to the eye must of course not be made a substitute for it. The context shows the high note in Fig. 24 (which is several times repeated) to have been *intended* for E, the position of which, on the paper, it about occupies. But, being on the first leger-line, it *is* A, and would be were it a yard above the staff! (The example is taken from a *printed*, not a manuscript copy! The first two notes are evidently intended as grace-notes, though the stems are turned down; the stems in the second half of the first measure should have been turned up.)



37.—In vocal music the singing of one syllable to two or more notes is shown in the case of whole notes, half notes, and quarters, by a slur (see Fig. 25). Vocal Music.

Te Deum. C. V. STANFORD.

be . . . con - found . . . ed.
Fig. 25.

It will be seen from the above that a slur does not dispense with the necessity for tying consecutive notes of the same pitch, occurring in a passage sung to one syllable. For an apparent exception see a passage from Handel's "But who may abide":

(re-fin-) . . . (er's fire)
Fig. 26.

But here, the repeated note occurring on a strong accent preceded by a weak one, is evidently intended *not* to be tied, but to receive an emphasis. (Similar exceptions may be found in "Every Valley.")

In modern music, when *all the notes of a measure* are to be sung to the *same* syllable, and there is *no likelihood of confusion*, the slur is often

40.—Syllables sung to notes extending over more space than themselves should be followed by dots if forming a complete word, and by strokes, or hyphens, if parts of a word. See preceding examples.

41.—In transcribing from open **Open Score** score to short score, a single sound **to Short Score.** sung by two voices simultaneously **Score.** beginning *and ending* at the same time, should, if a whole note, be represented by two note-heads linked; if a half note or shorter note, by having two stems, one up and the other down:



Fig. 29.

42.—*Black* notes, though of *different* lengths, may have the same note-head if they *begin* at the same time, the difference being shown in the hook or hooks:



Fig. 30.

But a whole note and a half note must have separate note-heads, since a stem would turn a

whole note into a half note; and a whole note or half note and a quarter note must have separate note-heads, since a note cannot be white and black at the same time. In this case *the notehead of shorter duration must be written first*:

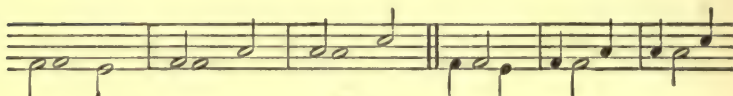


Fig. 31.

The rule is sometimes relaxed, and the longer note written first, when the shorter note is the first of a group.

Albeit a half note and an eighth, or other hooked note, may have the same note-head, *provided this be that of the half note*, because the hook shows that in one part the note is intended to be read as an eighth note. They cannot have an eighth note-head because there is nothing to distinguish the stem of a half note from that of a quarter:

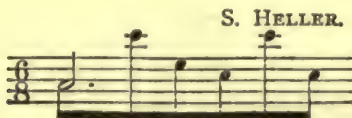


Fig. 32.

43.—Notes cannot have the same note-head which *begin* at different times, even though they

end at the same time. This would involve writing one of them in the wrong part of the measure (see "Placing of Notes," par. 14).

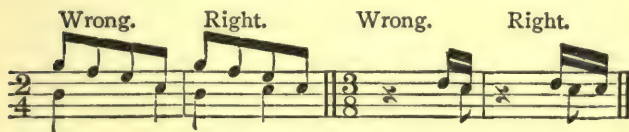


Fig. 33.

Hence, as a dotted quarter is a sixteenth shorter than two dotted eighths and a sixteenth, and therefore the final note does not *begin* at the same time (though it *ends* at the same time) in the treble and alto parts of the last group of Fig. 16 (par. 35), the example is inaccurate. It should have been written thus:



Fig. 34.

and would be so played were the passage given, say, to two violins.

[The tyro must not mistake the above two final note-heads, the *longer* of which comes first, for a breach of the rule exemplified in Fig. 31 (par. 42), and which applies to two notes which *begin* at the same time. Here the longer note begins *before* the shorter one.]

44.—In part-music all the accidentals in an open score will have to be reproduced in short score. Each performer is only supposed to read his own part, and cannot be assumed to have seen an accidental in another part which, had it been seen, would have rendered one in his own unnecessary. Thus the sharps in Fig. 35

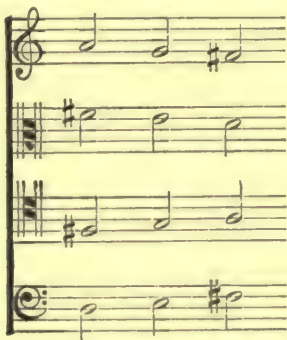


Fig. 35.

will remain in a transcription to short score,



Fig. 36.

if intended for part-singers or players. (A pianist or organist would not need the second sharp in each staff, while probably *preferring* it as a recognition of the part-writing character of the music.)

45.—In music which is *not* part-writing, the transcriber will have to use his discretion as to the repetition of accidentals which have already appeared in another “part” in the same measure. The guiding principle will be to avoid the likelihood of error on the part of a competent reader.

46.—Care must be taken to turn the stems of half notes and shorter notes according to the principles of short score, and not necessarily as they are in the open score.

47.—Co-relatively, in transcribing **Short Score** from short score to open, it will occasionally be necessary to put accidentals in the latter which are not in the former. The commonest form of this is probably in extracting a single part, soprano, alto, tenor, or bass, from an ordinary short score hymn or chant book, and writing it in a part-book for the particular voice. Thus, in transcribing the tenor of the following extract from the hymn-tune “Heathlands” into a part-book, it would be necessary to insert a natural before the A.

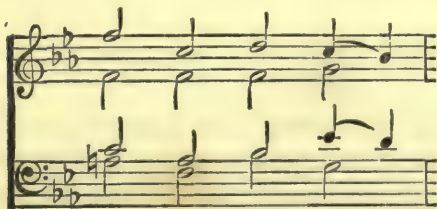


Fig. 37.

48.—Far more often, however, it is necessary to *omit* naturals used to contradict an accidental occurring in a part which is not being copied. Thus, in the following extract from the tune "Endless Alleluia," the natural in both the tenor and bass would be unnecessary were these parts written out separately from the other parts and each other.



Fig. 38.

(The A sharp in the tenor of this extract suggests C sharp so strongly apart from the rest of the harmony, that the natural is almost a necessity even had the previous treble C sharp not been included. Not being required according to rule, however, it should be enclosed in brackets—a not infrequent, and very commendable, device with careful writers, when an accidental is desirable but not necessary according to rule.)

49.—The stems, of course, must be turned up or down according to their position above or below the middle line, and not as in the short score.

50.—In copying out a single part **Extracting**
 from a score, full or short, care must **a Single**
 be taken in abbreviating a number of **Part.**
 measures' rest. The usual way of doing this
 is to write the number of measures over a single
 measure, thus:

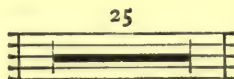


Fig. 39.

But if a pause occurs in any of the other parts
 of the score this will not do. The number of
 bars before the pause must be counted, and the
 pause—or pauses—shown in the abbreviation as
 follows, assuming it to occur in the thirteenth bar:



Fig. 40.

51.—The necessity for inserting **Accidentals.**
 accidentals in a part-copy which may
 not appear in a short-score, has just been
 pointed out. Yet the musical Hercules is beset
 with a Charybdis as well as a Scylla. He may
 be drawn into the bad and very irritating
 modern habit of using accidentals which are not
 really called for. Accidentals where unneces-
 sary are doubtless used with the object of
 making assurance doubly sure. They have *pre-*
cisely the reverse effect, besides being uncomplimentary—to put it mildly—to the intelligence

of the performer. Sharps, flats, and naturals which sometimes are *foreign* to the signature, and sometimes *duplicate* it, cause confusion where there was previously assurance. Bad enough at all times, they are, when one is transposing at sight, exasperating to the last degree.

An accidental is operative during the bar in which it occurs, and no further, unless it inflects the last note of a bar, and the next bar begins with the same note. It is so usual, however, to contradict an accidental in the bar *next* to that in which it occurs, that this practice may almost be said to have become a rule, breach of which might cause uncertainty in all but the clearest cases. This is no justification for the absurd practice of some writers, of contradicting an inflection the next time the same note *un*-inflected occurs, *however far off this may be!*

As a rule, a natural should only be used where the sharp or flat to be cancelled would *not* have to be repeated were the inflection intended to continue.

Legibility. 52.—A common cause of illegibility in manuscript music is what may be called a spider-like sameness in the web. Stems and hooks—indeed sometimes stems and note-heads!—are much of the same thickness and blackness. Compare them in printed music, and it will be seen that a dozen, perhaps a score, of stems could be spun out of one hook.

53.—Should it be necessary to erase and re-write a note, the blurred effect too often resulting may be almost entirely avoided by *penciling* the correct note before tracing it in ink. This produces a lead-lined groove and prevents the ink from running.

54.—Orthography is taught by the Facility.
careful making—drawing rather than writing—of large letters. The formation of a more rapid and individual hand does not come till later. So with musical phonography. The student, at whatever cost of time and patience, must first acquire *accuracy and clearness*. Not till *these are gained* must he think of rapidity and ease. Hence the consideration of facility has been deferred to the last.

Facility is well worthy of consideration, especially on the part of those who have much music to write. A little thought will often show how a character may be made in one stroke, which in any other way will take two or more, and that without any loss of clearness.

Thus a half note can be made in one stroke if begun at the point where the ring joins the stem; that is, at the *top* of the ring for upward stems, at the *under part* for downward stems.



Fig. 41.

Quarter notes may be made in one stroke if the head be begun first when the stem is upward, and the *stem* first when the stem is downward.



Fig. 42.

If this very simple expedient were more generally known, the practice of writing downward as well as upward stems at the right-hand side of the note-head—never done in printed music—would not be as common as it is. It should be added that to make a quarter or half note satisfactorily in one stroke, a pliable pen, fine, but spreading under pressure, and rapidly recovering itself, is necessary, otherwise the head will be too thin or the stem too thick.

Eighth notes, especially those with downward stems, are best made in two strokes. They can, however, be made in one if begun at the *bottom*. That is to say, those with upward stems must be begun at the head, and those with downward stems at the hook. This hook must be drawn thin, if made thick the pen will scratch when making the stem: if the head be made first the pen ends at the wrong side for a *downward* stem.



Fig. 43.

Each shorter note requires an additional action.

The G clef can be made in one stroke if begun at the innermost part of the curl, or at the downward extremity. The F clef requires three strokes, owing to the dots, each of which takes one to itself.

The C clef requires four movements, so does a sharp. A flat may be made in one stroke, but is very apt to look like a half note. A natural requires two movements.

Chords may be expeditiously formed, if with *downward* stem, by making the top note, with stem, first, and then adding the other notes. Chords with upward stems should be begun at the bottom.

(The joinings are purposely left imperfect to show the method. The numbers show the order of the four actions for the four notes.)

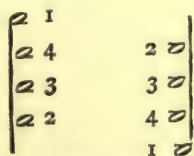


Fig. 44.

55.—A primer on musical orthography is hardly complete without a **Copyright.** As long as a work is in manuscript and copies are not offered for sale it enjoys the same protection,

under the common law, as if properly entered for copyright. It is an infringement of copyright to copy, reprint, publish, or vend the whole or any portion of a copyright work for any purpose whatsoever. It is an infringement to copy a hymn tune, a portion of an anthem, orchestral parts, or to transpose a song; such infringements can be prosecuted and the full penalty exacted. It can be readily understood that such copying deprives the composer or proprietor of his just returns from the sales of his work. To secure a copyright in the United States of America it is necessary to print on each and every copy, Copyright (date) by (name of proprietor), and to send to the Registrar of Copyright, Washington, D. C., two complete copies with a fee of one dollar for registration and a certificate under seal. The copyright is secured for twenty-eight years from the date of first publication with the privilege of a renewal for twenty-eight years, provided that notice of renewal is given the copyright office one year prior to the expiration of the first term. Securing an international copyright is usually undertaken by the publisher, as are also such matters as mechanical rights.

56.—When the finished composition is ready for publication, a fair copy should be made and care exercised to see that it is legible and correct in every particular. A few suggestions as to proofreading and correcting may prove useful. There are certain symbols in universal use which are as follows:

[move over

⊂ close up

8 take out

space

9 turn over

w. f. wrong font

tr transpose

l.c. lower case

These symbols should be marked on the margin of the proof (see sample page), and no other instructions are necessary. Notes are indicated by their position on the staff not by their names. The value of a note is indicated by a fraction. Slurs are drawn in and indicated by the word "slur." Dots are encircled with a line to give them prominence.

MARYTON.

L. M.

H. P. SMITH

1. Go, la - bor on! spend and be spent! Thy joy to
do the Fa - ther's will; It is the way the Mas - ter
went; Should not the ser - vant tread it still? A - men.

2 Go, labor on! 'tis not for naught;

Thine ~~loss~~ earthly is heavenly gain;

Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;

The ~~master~~ praises: what are men?

3 Go, labor on! enough, while here,

If He shall raise thee, if He deign

The willing heart and mark and cheer:

No toil for Him shall be in vain.

4 Go, labor on, where it is day!

The world's dark night is hastening on.

Speed, speed thy work! cast sloth away!


It is not thus that souls ~~are~~ won.

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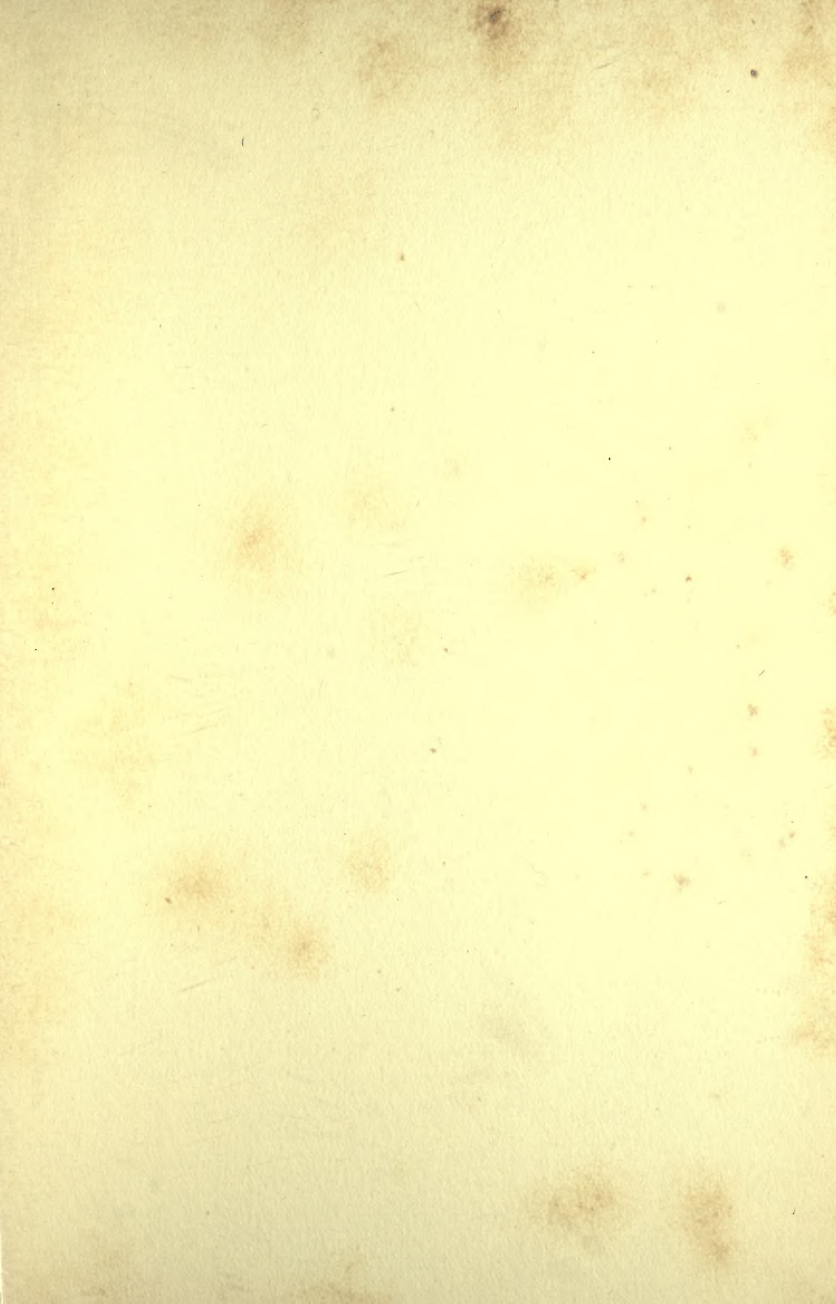
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